



Supports Intensity Scale® for Families and Providers of ID/DS Waiver Services

Why the National SIS®

- The Supports Intensity Scale® (SIS®) was developed by American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD) over a five-year period in response to changes in how society views and relates to people with disabilities.
- The SIS® is a standardized assessment tool, specifically designed to measure the pattern and intensity of supports an adult with developmental disabilities needs to be successful.



SIS[®] Development

- Normed with over 1306 people with intellectual and developmental disabilities who had a variety of support needs in 33 states and 2 Canadian provinces
- Individuals ranged in age from 16 to 72 and were culturally diverse
- Determined reliable and valid



The SIS® Today

- Currently, 23 states and 20 countries are in various stages of using the SIS®.
- A finalized version of the Children's SIS assessment is now available – SIS-C®



The SIS® Is a Reliable Method for Assessing Individual Support Needs

- The SIS® is **comprehensive**.
- It evaluates the **pattern and intensity of needed supports** in:
 - ✓ 6 Life Activity Domains (common to ALL persons)
 - ✓ Protection and Advocacy Activities
 - ✓ Exceptional Medical and Behavioral Supports



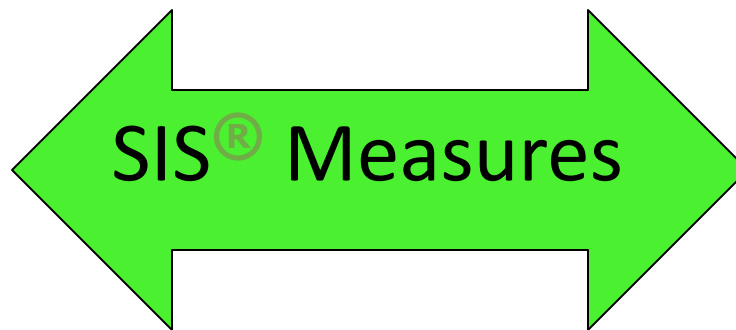
The SIS® Is a Reliable Method for Assessing Individual Support Needs

- The individual, team, interviewer, ratings and commentary create an accurate representation of the person's life.
- Ratings reflect the individual's current support needs.
- This information is used to assist the individual and his or her team to plan and move towards “the life I want” as identified by the individual.

Standards of Same
Age Adults in The
Community

-

Expectations
Responsibility
Involvement



the Difference:

Support Type,
Frequency, and
Daily Support Time

Individual's
Own Patterns
of
Behavior

-

Expectations
Responsibility
Involvement

Supports Intensity Scale



What does “support” mean in the
SIS[®] Assessment?



“Supports” are:

- The things we do with or for someone to help the person do something successfully.
- The things needed to have a life I want:
 - ✓ Home
 - ✓ Friends and relationships
 - ✓ Choices
 - ✓ Paid work or other meaningful day activity
 - ✓ Participation in community activities

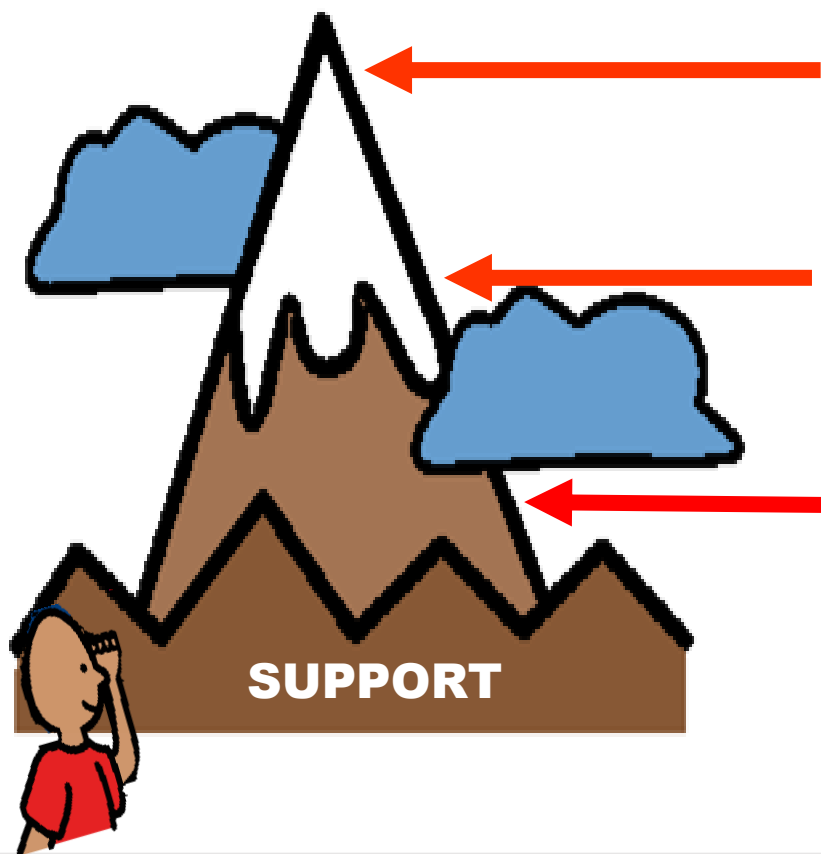


Supports Intensity Scale



What does "intensity" mean in the SIS[®] Assessment?

Intensity is the level of support an individual needs.



- Lots of support.
- Some support.
- A little support.

Supports Intensity **Scale**



What does "**scale**" mean in the SIS[®] Assessment?



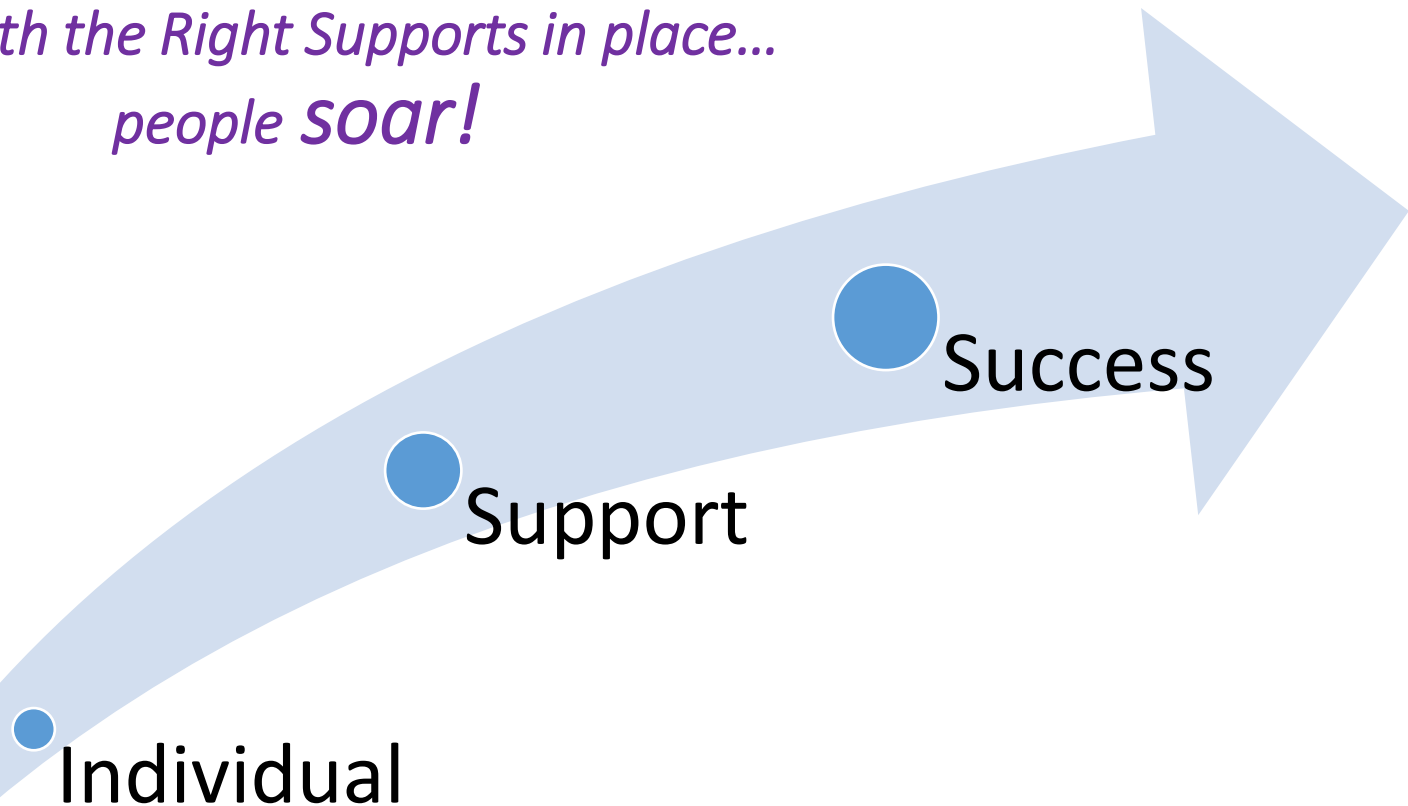
"Scale" means a standardized way of measuring support needs. Everyone is measured on the same basis.



Rating = 0 - 1- 2 - 3 - 4

Supported Success

*With the Right Supports in place...
people **SOAR!***



The SIS[®] Makes Sense for Virginia

- SIS[®] reflects a positive way of thinking about assessment, focusing on the supports needed by the individual to be successful versus his or her deficits.
- SIS[®] helps identify the resources a person needs to have a life at his or her greatest potential.



What the SIS® Provides

- Direct, reliable, and valid measure of supports needed across life areas
- Evaluation of the impact of significant medical and behavioral conditions
- A way to present the individual's support needs in comparison to a national sample of adults with developmental disabilities

What the SIS® Provides

- Help in planning for individualized supports and services
- Information useful in managing programs and developing supports budgets

The SIS® Uses a Small Group Interview Process

- To engage individuals and other respondents
- To consider supports that will meet the individual's needs and promote personal growth
- To involve the individual as a vital source of information



Assessment Schedule

- The SIS® is administered to all individuals with an ID/DS Waiver.
- A SIS® assessment is completed every three years for adults and every two years for children.
- At the start of Waiver and each year thereafter, an Annual Risk Assessment is completed by the SC/CM.

Who conducts SIS[®] interviews in Virginia?

- DBHDS contracted with Ascend Management Innovations to conduct SIS[®] assessments in Virginia.
- Ascend Management Innovations:
www.ascendami.com

Scheduling the Interview

- An Ascend scheduler will contact the Support Coordinator/Case Manager to initiate scheduling of the interview.
- The SC/CM identifies a likely location for the interview that best enhances the individual's participation.

Scheduling the Interview

- The individual should be encouraged to participate as much as possible. At a minimum the interviewer must meet the individual.
- Primary respondents must stay for the duration of the interview.
- If a person uses Assistive Technology, he or she should have it for use during the interview.

“The interview is about the individual’s life. It is not the family’s or provider’s interview.”

~AAIDD 2008



SIS® Interviewers Are Professionals Who:

- Have experience in the field of Developmental Disabilities
- Have participated in Ascend's rigorous training schedule
- Have passed AAIDD's Interviewer Reliability and Qualification Review sessions
- Have been endorsed by AAIDD as a SIS® interviewer

What will the interviewer do?



- **Explain** the interview process
- **Ask** the interview questions
- **Record** your answers

What will the interviewer do?

- **Assist** the team to develop a clear picture of the individual's support needs because:
 - Not everyone sees the individual the same way
 - Individuals need different supports in different settings

Respondents

A **Respondent** is a person designated to answer questions about the support needs of the individual.



SIS[®] Interview Respondents

- The right respondents can make a difference in capturing an accurate picture of an individual's support needs
- An interview typically includes:
 - The individual
 - A direct support staff person from the employment or day services provider
 - A direct support staff person from the residential provider
 - The support coordinator
 - The guardian or a family member may be present

During the Interview Respondents Will:

- ✓ **Answer all the questions**, even if they don't seem to apply to the individual now or in the future.
- ✓ **Be ready to describe supports**. This is what makes the assessment picture complete and person-centered.
- ✓ **Be specific** when describing the support needs of the individual.

A Primary Respondent is an individual who:

- Has known the individual for at least the last three months
- Has had recent opportunities to observe the person functioning in one or more settings for substantial periods of time.

SIS® Respondent: Support Coordinator / Case Manager

- The SC/CM must attend.
- If the SC/CM is familiar with the individual's support needs, he/she may participate as a respondent.
- If the SC/CM does not meet the criteria as a respondent, he/she will participate as an observer.

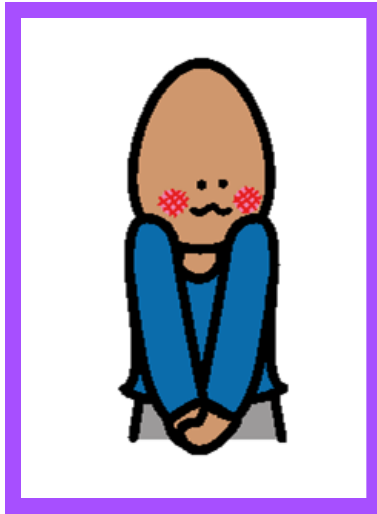
Distribution of the SIS:

- The SC/CM sends the SIS results to guardian/family members and providers between 8 – 15 business days after the interview.
- Long form report is the official record of the assessment.
- Providers are required to have a copy available for review in the individual's record.

SIS® Respondents: Service Providers

Who Attends?

- The SC/CM contacts the service provider, who helps identify the appropriate persons to serve as respondents.
- Additional support staff from each service area may attend as respondents, if a more thorough understanding of the supports is needed.



If respondents know any topics that may:

- make the individual feel uncomfortable or
- trigger uncomfortable responses

- ✓ Help the individual tell the interviewer or
- ✓ Tell the interviewer yourself, prior to the interview

Things To Know About the Interview

- The SIS[®] is not a test. It is a guided conversation with participants.
- It's important for respondents to give their input and be as accurate as possible.
- Since the SIS[®] is a standardized assessment, all the questions must be answered even if they don't seem to relate to the individual now or in the future.



What Kind of Questions Will Be Asked at the Interview?



SIS[®] Format

- Administration time is most often between 2-3 hours
- In order to obtain the information needed, the SIS[®] asks for information in a semi-structured format.
- Some questions may appear to be similar but actually capture different information.



Sections of the SIS®

- Support Needs (Section 1)
- Protection and Advocacy (Section 2)
- Exceptional Medical Support Needs (Section 3A)
- Exceptional Behavioral Support Needs (Section 3B)
- Supplemental Questions – may be asked to get a clearer picture of support needs, including risk of falls



Medical and Behavioral Sections

- Completed 1st to help the interviewer become more familiar with the person.
- Rated to reflect the support needs the individual has at the time of the assessment.
- The SIS[®] is a snapshot in time.

Two Rating Keys

Exceptional Medical/Behavioral Supports Needs (Sections 3A and 3B)

- No Support Needed
- Some Support Needed
- Extensive Support Needed

Activity Domains (Sections 1 and 2)

- Type of Support
- Frequency of Support
- Daily Support Time



Ratings

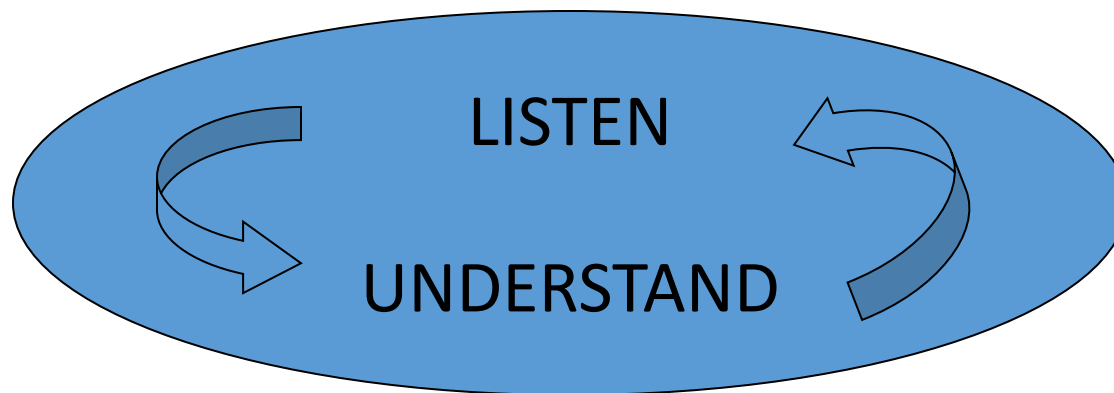
- Items with higher ratings do not necessarily have to be a part of the individual's Individual Support Plan.
- Those planning decisions will be informed by the SIS[®] and prioritized by the Personal Profile development completed by the person and the team.



Important “To” the Person

- What individuals say “in their own words”
- What individuals say with “their own behavior”
- What you hear depends on what you are listening for

~ ELP Learning Community 2005



Important “For” the Person

- Health
- Safety
- Being a valued member of his or her community



The Person Centered Process Tells Us About the Individual's:

- Health and safety needs
- Description of the “Life I Want.”
- What's works and not working

The Person Centered Process Tells Us About the Individual's:

- Desired outcomes
- Supports needed to reach those outcomes
- The SIS is part of the PC process. It is neither the beginning nor the end

Level of Functioning Survey

- Level of Functioning is the assessment that determines eligibility for ID Waiver.
- Information on the SIS[®] should be consistent with the information in the Level Of Functioning (LOF).
- The LOF is completed annually prior to or at the plan meeting.

A New SIS® Is Needed When:

- An individual is new to ID/DS Waiver
- The Exceptional Support Rate is being requested

A New SIS® Is Needed When:

- There has been significant and sustained increase/decrease in medical or behavioral support needs (Sections 3A/3B of SIS) over a period of 6 months
- There has been a sustained and significant change in any 2 Life/Activity Domains (Life Activity Domains: Section 1, Parts A-F & Section 2 of the SIS)

Appeal Process

- **Who can appeal?**

The SIS[®] may only be appealed by the individual, his/her legal guardian/authorized representative or her/his family members.

- **What can be appealed?**

The Standard Operating Procedures were **not** followed.

- **What cannot be appealed?**

A SIS[®] score is **not** appealable.



Contact information

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Region 5: Brandy Martin – 804-221-2749 / brandy.martin@dbhds.virginia.gov

Region Support Supervisor: Joan Bender – 804-774-4469 / joan.bender@dbhds.virginia.gov

State SIS Coordinator: Cheri Stierer – 804-786-0803 / cheri.stierer@dbhds.virginia.gov



Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services

“A life of possibilities for all Virginians”

www.dbhds.virginia.gov

Thank you!